



Grandma
GOT STEAM.



Science and storytelling are both powerful tools that help us to understand the world around us and our place within it better.

They become even more important when they act as bridges, bringing people of different ages and experiences together, to envision the possibilities that open up to us when we allow ourselves to believe in our own potential.

Now, imagine this...five women. Mothers! Actually, grandmothers who all have a career in science, technology, engineering, art or maths (STEAM). Imagine the stories they would have to tell and share, the knowledge and experience that would make them brilliant mentors to youth who have not yet fully discovered their potential and are sometimes overwhelmed by the

choices they need to make and also, at times, stifled by the norms that society imposes on them.

Meet these women here: Irene, the Mathematics professor; Agatha, the conservator and artist; Doris, the pharmacist; Mary, the seamstress; Rose, the chemistry teacher.

In *Grandma Got Steam*, their life stories inspire a group of twenty young people to create a set of storytelling cards with multiple protagonists and plenty of adventures. The pack and instructions for use are available for free download from www.esplora.org.mt/GrandmaGotSTEAM

CREDITS

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THE STORYTELLING PACK

The storytelling pack includes twenty cards split into four categories: characters, places, objects and obstacles.

The cards, and accompanying storyboard sheet, may be used to craft various stories in which a character goes on an adventure, encounters danger, finds ways to overcome all difficulties and succeeds in achieving various goals.

Each card includes an explanation and directions for use. Mix and match the cards to retell the stories of the five grandmothers presented here or create your own.

In your story, the grandmother can be a little girl or a grown woman. She has dreams but also encounters obstacles. She meets people who help her and others who try to harm her. She finds solutions. The ending will develop depending on how she deals with the difficulties and opportunities that come her way.

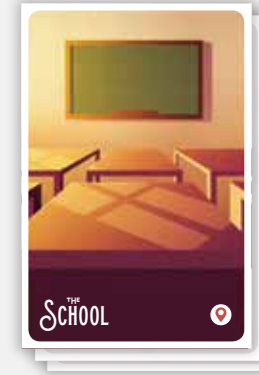


CHARACTERS



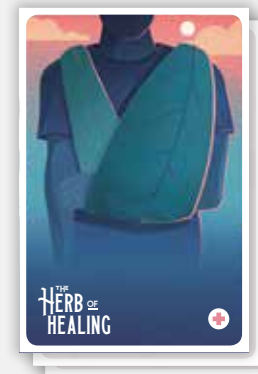
The Girl
The Grandmother
The Father
The Boy
The Trickster
The Savage Beast

PLACES



The Kitchen
The Island
The School
The Laboratory
The Street

OBJECTS



The Herb of Healing
The Gift of Bravery
The Brush of Dreams
The Calculator of Danger
The Pattern of Survival

OBSTACLES



The Failure to Communicate
The Conflict of Ideas
The Lens of Doubt
The Battle for Space



STORIES / EXAMPLES

These are some examples of stories you can use to get you started on your storytelling adventure!

Example 1

The minute she wrapped her fingers around the pair of scissors, Mary knew they would change her life forever. But how? As always, her mother had the answer.

'Go', she said, 'to the tiny, old woman who lives in the narrow street by the village

square and is always seated in the same chair surrounded by tens, no hundreds, no thousands, of material scraps!

Show her your scissors and listen to what she says very carefully. If you are deserving, she will honour you with her blessing, her pattern of survival.'

Example 2

She looked out of the window at the other children playing in the sun and splashing in the big puddles left behind by the rain.

'Please!', she begged.

'No, you'll be ill', he replied, 'I love you so much I cannot bear the thought of anything happening to you.'

Rose, torn between the longing to go

out to play and a deep love for her father embraced him and retreated to the laboratory he had built for her. There were her faithful companions – beakers, burners, bottles, baskets and bits and pieces that she used to create her own world.

Her father believed great things were in store for Rose. He often told her that she had the whole world at her feet and could be anything she wanted to be. As a little girl, Rose wasn't so sure...

Example 3

The children stood by the kitchen sink watching the tears roll down her cheeks.

'What's up Mummy? Why are you crying?', they asked as they took her hands into theirs.

At first, Agatha thought of inventing an excuse but her head and heart were too full of guilt and sorrow to think of anything but the truth.

'The thing is, children, I've lost my brush of dreams. It's gone and all I see ahead of me is dull and colourless and this makes me too tired to go in search of it.'

'Is that it, Mum? Is that why you are crying?', they looked at each other and smiled. 'Then perhaps we can help, we have the perfect gift for you!'

Example 4

The space was huge. How many seats were laid out? A hundred? No. More than three hundred at least!

Irene sat down, she needed to catch her breath. Could she do this? Was the robed mathematician right about her? He was worried that she may be out of her depth, that formulas were too complicated and students too demanding for her to manage. Could she calculate her skill, their demands and her chances of success?

Breathe, she reminded herself. They were filing into the room now. He had won. He had tricked her into believing that this was all a big mistake.

Example 5

Doris would never give up.

'Can't you see that you will lose this fight?', the angry man shouted, waving the lens of doubt in the air.

She stopped to think for a moment.

'No,' she replied. 'No, I will not lose this fight. I have worked hard all my life to build this pharmacy and to gain the trust of the people who live here. I won't let you take it all away from us in one day!'

Suddenly, the lens of doubt was up in the air, flying towards Doris. Would she manage to turn his anger into something positive or would he strike her down?



STORYBOARD

Each story needs a protagonist - the main character.

Once you choose the main character, decide what all the characters want and where they are heading. Along the way, they use objects to overcome obstacles. They also meet others who help or cause difficulty. How does your story end?

Use the cards to help you map out the story before telling it to your friends.

1

Who is this character?

What does this character desire?

2

Where is the character going?

What is standing in the character's way?

What is the character taking with them?

3

Who does the character meet?

What is taken from the character?

How is the character feeling?

How does the character react?

4

What does the character want now?

What has the character learnt?



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Grandma got STEAM is an intergenerational project that brings together a group of young people from Aġenzija Żgħażaġh and women with families and successful careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths.

Curated by **Esplora** and **Spazju Kreattiv**, participants worked with **Giuliana Fenech** (Lignin Stories) (storyteller), **Julian Mallia** a.k.a **Julinu** (visual artist) and **Dragana Rankovic** (photographer), to develop a pack of illustrated storytelling cards that features characters and plots drawn from the life and work experiences of the women.

The pack, which functions as a storytelling tool and may be used by anyone with an interest in story and community, is available at www.esplora.org.mt/GrandmaGotSTEAM

